

ROCHESTER REVIEW

SOCIAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2
FEBRUARY 2009

Black History Month



2009's Black History Month theme is *The Quest for Black Citizenship in the Americas*. Celebrate with your classes and investigate this year's theme at the Association for the Study of African American Life and History ([http://](http://asalh.org/2009NationalBlackHistoryTheme.html)

asalh.org/2009NationalBlackHistoryTheme.html).

Check out these other resources from...

- Teaching Tolerance: Black History Month Classroom Activities
→ www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/index.jsp
- The History Channel
→ www.history.com/minisites/blackhistory
- PBS: African American World
→ www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/
- About.com: African-American History
→ <http://afroamhistory.about.com/>
- Biography.com: Celebrate Black History
→ www.biography.com/blackhistory/index.jsp

“Looking at Lincoln” this year?

Join us February 25th at the Memorial Art Gallery to explore a special exhibit of art, artifacts and memorabilia celebrating the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln on the 200th anniversary of his birth. Roxana Aparicio Wolf of The George Eastman House will discuss the photographs- many of which are in the exhibit - that have come to identify and immortalize Lincoln. The in-service will include strategies to analyze historical photographs as well as the prints and paintings inspired by these iconic images.

The exhibit will be held on February 25, 2009 from 4:30-7:00 pm. Registration costs \$30.00 and prepayment is required (registration fee will be paid for by the Teaching American History Grant for RCSD Social Studies Teachers). To register, contact Kerry Donovan at kdonovan@mag.rochester.edu or (585) 276-8971. Offered in conjunction with exhibit Abraham Lincoln in Rochester.



Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12th, 1809. As our sixteenth President of the United States, he presided over one of the most tumultuous times in our history. This year marks the 200th anniversary of his birth. Visit the sites listed below for facts, pictures, and audio and video recreation sources which you can use in your classroom to engage your students in learning about one of our country's most influential and best-remembered Presidents.

- Illinois Bicentennial Commission
→ www.lincoln200.net/
- C-Span: Lincoln 200 Years
→ www.c-span.org/lincoln200years/
- Lincoln Bicentennial Teacher Resources
→ <http://lincoln.georgetowncollege.edu/>
- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History
→ www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/lincoln.html
- Quizmoz Abraham Lincoln Quiz
→ www.quizmoz.com/quizzes/Great-Americans-Quizzes/a/Abraham-Lincoln-Quiz.asp

“Things may come to those who wait. But only the things left by those who hustle.”





From the Director...

Celebrations and commemorations of Black History Month in our Social Studies classrooms abound throughout the city. I am proud of the myriad examples of quality experiences you are providing our students. The student leadership team at Jefferson planned and prepared public awareness announcements focused on contributions of notable African American citizens. Mr. Ed Wilson at Wilson Foundation Academy introduced students to the music of Etta James to teach the impact of "mental slavery" on self concept, coupled with images of how African American artists and leaders have incorporated calls for positive self-images in their work. The classroom dialogue turned to issues of inequity in school funding and programs, as one young woman requested we open the dialogue about school quality and urban-suburban disparities. The power of such lessons opens the door for deeper understanding of why education has the power to transform lives. I commend every teacher for their daily efforts to assure that our daily work is aimed at connecting to students' cultural history and that we make every possible effort to seek relevant and meaningful connections to course content. When learning is both relevant and rigorous, student engagement with school learning increases.



My name is Steve LaMorte and I've recently started as a Lead Teacher for Secondary Social Studies. I am originally from Queens, NYC, and began teaching in the RCSD in 2000. I've spent most of my career here at Monroe High School and have met many of you through Social Studies Council and technology PD's I've taken part in through the demonstration classrooms. Please, think of me as an extra pair of hands that is willing to help out my Social Studies brethren in any way possible. I can do some research, come up with class activities, help you try out a new lesson or strategy in class - I will do my best to support you in anything you need. I know some of you won't believe this, but I've been in this position for less than a week and I am already desperately missing working with students!! Please help me control my student withdrawal syndrome and invite me into your classes. You can contact me via district e-mail or call my desk at 328-0037 (X1032).

Social Studies Council

Each school should have one representative attending monthly Social Studies Council meetings. Meetings will be held on the following dates, with representatives from secondary schools attending from 3:30 - 4:30 and representatives from elementary schools from 4:00 - 5:00.

- Monday, February 23
- Monday, April 13
- Monday, May 18

Social Studies Teaching & Learning Communities

"Social Studies TLC" Collegial Circles will be forming soon! Three groups will take shape, one focusing on American History, one for World History, and another for any Social Studies teacher with 5 years or less of experience. These circles will aim to address the unique needs of Social Studies teachers and will focus on the sharing of content knowledge, instructional strategies, and resources. Keep your eyes peeled for more information!

TEACHING AS HISTORIANS



The Teaching As Historians program is up and running. The program's first offering, entitled *Focusing with Foggy Lenses: The Importance and Limitations of Doing History*, will be held on March 20, 2009. This lecture will be presented by Dr. James Spiller, Associate Professor of History, SUNY Brockport.

The Teaching as Historians program is funded through the RCSD's Teaching American History Grant and is open to all interested Social Studies teachers, including Bilingual, Special Education, and other instructors with a Social Studies focus. Contact Steve LaMorte for more information (stephen.lamorte@rcsdk12.org).

Students Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk



School Without Walls and East High School 7th and 8th grade students attended the Landmark Society's production of *Walk the Walk*, an inspiring program in which students walk in the footsteps of historic Rochesterians. Students spent time with Captain Sunfish, George Brown, Frederick Douglass, Anna Murray Douglass, an orphan from the Dorsey Home for Homeless Colored Children. This program aims to motivate students to know that they have personal power linked to our African American ancestors who, through their personal actions, carved a path for others to fight injustices in our community. Many thanks go to Cindy Boyer at the Landmark Society for bringing this event to our students.



Below: Captain Sunfish Regales Rochester City School Students at Walk the Walk on February 5, 2009

If you have a news-worthy event, please let us know by contacting the Social Studies Office at 262-8470 or emailing Jennifer Gkourlias and we will feature it in an upcoming issue of the Rochester Review. Student work and photographs are welcome and encouraged.

